

CUSTOMER PROFILE

PUBLIC SERVICES

LAWSON AT DALLAS AREA RAPID TRANSIT

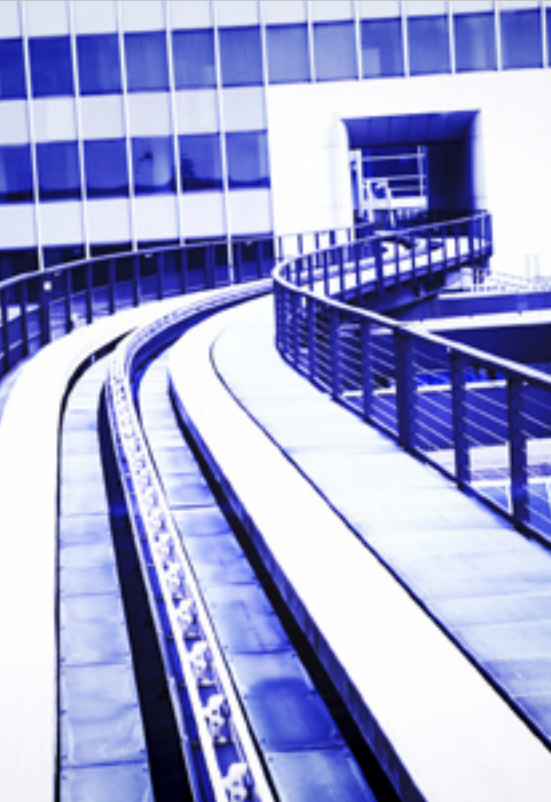


Lawson® Helps Dallas Area Rapid Transit Accelerate Efficiencies, Put the Brakes on Costs

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) is a public transportation entity funded in large part by a one-cent transit sales tax. The national economic slowdown has prompted the agency to streamline its operating budget and pursue aggressive cost containment measures. DART is relying on Lawson technology, automation and Web-based applications to help maintain efficient service and back-office cost controls.

“We won’t have to install the Lawson desktop on everyone’s computer and that provides us with a significant savings in maintenance. We’ll also be able to access the Lawson system anywhere, which is a huge convenience.”

**Richard Jarrett, Assistant Vice President, Information Technology,
Dallas Area Rapid Transit**



Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) operates a multimodal transit network of rail, bus, paratransit, high occupancy vehicle lane and rideshare services throughout Dallas and 12 surrounding cities. Approximately 300,000 commuters use DART services daily to travel between points in a 700-square-mile service area.

DART has been faced with dual challenges over the past year: the economic downturn and a subsequent 22 percent reduction in administrative costs, and the need to maintain fast, comfortable and economical service to its commuters.

Business Situation

As a publicly funded entity, DART carefully tracks its key performance indicators, such as tax subsidy per passenger, cost per mile, customer complaints per 100,000 passengers carried and other important financial and operational information. Budget reductions have made scrutiny of these numbers more important than ever as DART seeks to manage costs without compromising service quality.

“When we are operating in an economic climate like this, we know that technology and automation are the quickest routes to addressing cost concerns,” says Richard Jarrett, DART’s assistant vice president, Information Technology. He adds that DART’s IT infrastructure reaches everywhere in the organization, serving approximately 3,000 internal customers per day and supporting Web interfaces used by nearly 200,000 external customers per day.

Solution

DART is a 21-year Lawson customer and uses Lawson Financials, Human Resources, Distribution and Procurement running on a UNIX platform to support its accounting, payroll, human resources, procurement and sales departments. Approximately 100 DART employees use the Lawson system daily, while all employees use Web self-service throughout the year.

“Using Lawson Application Gateway Service (AGS) and Data Mining Engine (DME) our Web team has developed enterprise-wide intranet applications to support business processes such as invoice tracking and payments, automated time sheet approvals, purchase requests, applications processing, employee status changes and many others that have saved DART hundreds of thousands of dollars by improving productivity and efficiencies,” says Jarrett. “Without Lawson’s open architecture we would not have been able to develop those automated workflow applications with such ease and speed.”

Lawson is also integrated with DART’s transportation management systems, such as Trapeze Software, its Spear Technologies software for fleet/asset maintenance and its own intranet called DARTnet. Lawson’s CASE Tool has also provided the means of developing multiple custom applications that support the Procurement department with a custom Contracts management module, the Diversity and Economic Opportunity (DEO) Department with a custom minority vendor tracking and performance module and other smaller applications that have proven to improve efficiencies.



For example, DART uses Lawson Inventory Control to track the array of transportation passes purchased through its Website and from other distribution locations such as grocery stores. Its Website purchases are directly fed into Lawson Accounts Receivable.

Internally, Jarrett says, Lawson Employee and Manager Self-Service has saved the Human Resources department thousands of dollars worth of time that would have otherwise been spent answering employee questions on their benefits and payroll issues. Human Resources also has realized savings with Lawson Garnishments.

"The addition of Garnishments to Lawson Payroll alone has saved us at least a position and a half in HR," says Jarrett. "We were previously having to do garnishments by hand. Now they are handled automatically and fed straight through accounts payable."

DART is now in Phase II of a three-phase project to upgrade to Lawson 8.0x and expects the upgrade to be complete in March 2004. Jarrett says they are looking forward to the ability to use Lawson Portal browser-based interface with Lawson 8.0x.

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"We're an organization that prides itself on up-time, and Lawson is a solid product that keeps us going," says Jarrett. "And, best of all, the Lawson people are great to work with."

Business Benefits

DART has been challenged with a declining budget — 22 percent over the last year — lay-offs of approximately 8% of the salaried workforce and yet still needs to maintain fast, comfortable and economical service to its commuters.

Lawson's open architecture helps DART developers quickly and easily develop custom applications and screens.

Ease of integration with non-Lawson transportation systems has allowed DART to develop enterprise-wide intranet applications to support a vast variety of business processes.

Lawson Employee and Manager Self-Service has helped save DART thousands of dollars worth of time that would have traditionally been spent answering employee questions regarding pay and benefits.

About the Solution

Lawson Financials, Human Resources, Distribution, Procurement running on a UNIX platform.

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